



BIRTHPLACE

Nadine Big Bear was born in 1947 on the Meskwaki Settlement in Iowa.

CHILDHOOD

Nadine Big Bear learned the craft of beading from her mother and grandmother. She thinks of being “raised that way” rather than being taught the craft.

POSITION

Nadine Big Bear creates commissioned beadwork for individual clients.

INSPIRATION/INFLUENCE

When Ms. Big Bear creates a work for a specific person, sometimes they request certain colors or designs. She also creates for the personality of the person for whom she is making the work. She conveys that she is creating something from scratch, building something from the heart and soul. When the person puts on the beaded object, they feel good, and to see them happy makes her feel good. She hopes that everyone who creates beadwork will “feel proud” and encourages them to be creative.

BIOGRAPHY

Nadine Big Bear

ART FORM

Nadine Big Bear creates her bead artwork exclusively with beads from Czechoslovakia. She relates that the quality is “perfect” and far superior to anything she can obtain elsewhere. The web site www.beadinpath.com contains a description of one beader’s search for beads made in Czechoslovakia.

The artist went to Prague in search of the homes where beads were made: “She said after a while she got really good at finding them. You just had to look for homes with two chimneys, one in the front, and one in the back. These “factories for beads” are in actual homes where the family lives, and are located in the front of the building. The chimney there serves as the heat source for making beads. The chimney in the back is in the living part of the home, and is used for cooking and warmth.

WEB SITE

www.beadinpath.com

www.native-languages.org/beadwork

Google: [Native American Beadwork](#)

ARTWORK DISPLAYED

- Des Moines Art Center
- Tribal Center and Casino Museum Display at Meskwaki Settlement in Tama, Iowa